

7. (Amended) A semiconductor device as claimed in any one of claim 1, wherein a patterned insulating layer is provided on the semiconductor body, wherein in the active cell area the insulating layer provides an insulating overlayer on the trench-gates and the insulating layer has windows where the source electrode contacts the source regions, and wherein in the inactive area a window in the insulating layer provides the gate electrode contact area.

8. (Amended) A semiconductor device as claimed in claim 1, wherein in the active cell area an insulating layer is provided in the trenches between the gate material in the trenches and the semiconductor body adjacent the trenches.

9. (Amended) A semiconductor device as claimed in claim 1, wherein the gate electrode provides a gate bond pad within the gate electrode contact area.

REMARKS

Claims 1-14 are pending. Claims 10-14 have been withdrawn from consideration. By this amendment, claims 1, 5, and 6 have been amended. Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. No new matter is believed added.

Claims 1-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Okumura (US 6,265,744). This rejection is defective because Okumura fails to teach each and every feature of the claims as required by 35 U.S.C. 102.

Regarding claim 1, Okumura fails to teach a trench-gate semiconductor-body having

active cell areas and inactive cell areas, wherein linking cells are provided "across the inactive and active areas, wherein each linking cell has a first region contacted by the gate electrode and a source region contacted by the source electrode." As shown in FIGS. 7A and 9 of Okumura, the source electrode 41 and the gate electrode 43 do not contact a cell area (i.e., a "linking cell") between the trenches 29 having a first region and source region. Accordingly, because the cited art fails to teach each and every feature of the claims, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Applicant respectfully submits that, unless expressly stated otherwise: (1) no amendment made was related to the statutory requirements of patentability; and (2) no amendment was made for the purpose of narrowing the scope of any claims. Applicant further respectfully submits that the application is in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner believe that anything further is necessary, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicant's undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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